

Message Text

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72

ACTION EUR-25

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FM AMEMBASSY BONN

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INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION BERLIN

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

AMCONSUL BREMEN

AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

AMCONSUL HAMBURG

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

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TAGS: PINT, GW

SUBJECT: FDP PARTY CONGRESS NOVEMBER 12-14: HIGHLIGHTS

REF: BONN 16273

SUMMARY: IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF PREVAILING OPTIMISM, SELF-CONFIDENCE AND HARMONY, TEMPERED BY A SPIRIT OF PRAGMATISM AND RESPONSIBILITY, DELEGATES AT THE FDP CONVENTION IN WIESBADEN LENT THEIR ALMOST UNDIVIDED SUPPORT TO THE FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC POLICIES OF THE PARTY LEADERSHIP. FOREIGN MINISTER AND PARTY LEADER WALTER SCHEEL ESTABLISHED THE DOMINANT THEME OF THE CONVENTION, HIGHLIGHTING THE INDEPENDENT POLITICAL ROLE AND INCREASING POPULARITY

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OF THE FDP, DEFENDING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE GOVERN-

MENT, PLEDGING CONTINUATION OF THE SPD/FDP COALITION UNTIL 1976 AT LEAST, AND SHARPLY CRITICIZING THE CDU/CSU. END SUMMARY.

1. SCHEEL DEVOTED THE FIRST HALF OF HIS OPENING SPEECH TO FOREIGN POLICY. HE IMMEDIATELY SEIZED UPON THE MIDDLE EAST ISSUE AS A SPECIFIC EXAMPLE OF HIS GENERAL PROPOSITION THAT THE FRG IS PURSUING A COURSE WHICH PERMITS IT TO DEVELOP ITS OWN POLICY AND TO PLAY A ROLE IN WORLD POLITICS CORRESPONDING TO ITS CAPABILITIES. SCHEEL SAID THAT THE MIDDLE EAST CRISIS DEMONSTRATED THAT THE FUNDAMENTAL TENETS OF FRG FOREIGN POLICY--NATO, WEST EUROPEAN UNITY, AND DETENTE--ARE ALL REALIZABLE GOALS, OF WHICH EUROPEAN UNITY TAKES "VERY TOP PRIORITY." NATO, LIKE ANY ALLIANCE, IS SUBJECT TO STRAINS SAID SCHEEL, BUT THE NATO PARTNERS ARE BOUND TOGETHER BY A COMMON DESTINY AND THE ALLIANCE WILL SUCCEED IN STRENGTHENING AND RENEWING ITSELF. DESPITE THE RECENT "WORRISOME" ACTIONS OF THE GDR, OSTPOLITIK HAS BROUGHT BENEFITS AND MUST BE PURSUED.

2. TURNING TO DOMESTIC POLITICS, SCHEEL PROCEEDED IN A LOW KEY BUT SKILLFULLY NUANCED STATEMENT TO CARVE OUT THE FDP'S POSITION IN THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM AND TO DEFINE ITS ROLE. HE CAME DOWN VERY HARD AGAINST THE CDU/CSU.

SCHEEL CALLED THE CDU A PARTY WHICH "DOES NOT FUNCTION, DOES NOT KNOW WHAT IT WANTS, AND IS NEITHER FISH NOR FOWL." HE LEFT NO DOUBT THAT IT COULD NOT BE CONSIDERED A SUITABLE COALITION PARTNER IN THE NEAR FUTURE. WHILE NOTING THAT HE HAD NO USE FOR THE SPD'S EXTREME LEFT WING, HE MADE IT ABUNDANTLY CLEAR THAT THE FDP WOULD CONTINUE TO CAST ITS LOT WITH THE "GOVERNMENT WING" OF THE SPD. "THE CDU SHOULD NOT ENTERTAIN THE HOPE THAT IT CAN ENTICE US OUT OF THE PRESENT COALITION. THE CHANCELLOR AND I HAVE PROMISED EACH OTHER TO WORK TOGETHER ON THE BASIS OF THE GOVERNMENT DECLARATION UNTIL THE END OF THE LEGISLATIVE PERIOD. SO IT REMAINS."

4. RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED AT THE CONVENTION, INCLUDING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS, RADICALS IN PUBLIC SERVICE AND MEDIA POLICY, FOLLOWED THE MAIN LINE SET BY THE EXECUTIVE BOARD. WHILE STEERING CLEAR OF DESTRUCTIVE FACTIONALISM, THE DELEGATES ALSO MANAGED TO AVOID THE TEMPTATION OF COMPLACENT SELF-SATISFACTION. INTRA-PARTY DISAGREEMENTS WERE AIRED, BUT DECISIONS WERE ACCEPTED IN CONCILIATORY SPIRIT, REFLECTING AWARENESS THAT THE PARTY NOW HAS OPPORTUNITIES WHICH MUST NOT BE

THROWN AWAY.
HILLENBRAND

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